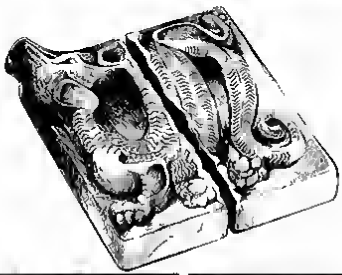
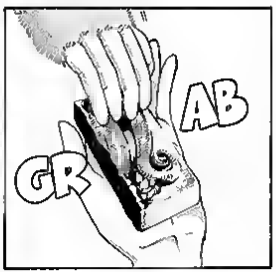
Whoever has it...

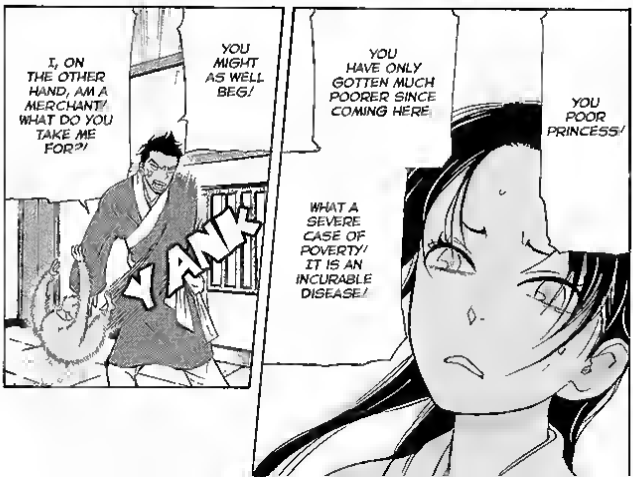
holds Ah's fate in their hands





I DID NOT MEAN YOU!
SCREEECH!
Screech
Struggle
Screech
HAND IT OVER! NOW!!!
I AM LOOKING AT AN IDIOT.
Screech
Screech
Screech
Screech
Screech
JAHAR, WHAT ARE YOU JUST STANDING THERE FOR?!
GET THIS KID OUTSIDE IMMEDIATELY!

LOOK HERE, PRINCESS-SAMA! I HAVE STOOD BY YOU, BECAUSE I THOUGHT I WOULD MAKE MONEY!
BUT HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO MAKE ANYTHING IN A PLACE LIKE THIS?!
chirp
chirp
chirp
caw
caw
Kou
Small Eastern Castle


I, ON THE OTHER HAND, AM A MERCHANT! WHAT DO YOU TAKE ME FOR?!
YOU MIGHT AS WELL BEG!
YANK
YOU HAVE ONLY GOTTEN MUCH POORER SINCE COMING HERE.
YOU POOR PRINCESS!
WHAT A SEVERE CASE OF POVERTY! IT IS AN INCURABLE DISEASE!

A WALLET.
I LOOKED AROUND, AND IT SEEMS THERE ARE ONLY A FEW SOLDIERS HERE. IT DOES NOT MAKE THE CASTLE VERY USEFUL.
I WANT TO FIX THIS, SO I HAVE A FAVOR TO ASK.
WAIT.
MY HELP COMES AT A PRICE, PRINCESS.
WILL YOU AT LEAST PAY WITH YOUR BODY?

THWACK
DID YOU MEAN SOMETHING LIKE THIS?
FOR ME, THAT...
THE WELL IS HALF-EMPTY
Screech
FALL
...!
AND I SUGGEST WE USE HIS MONEY TO HIRE SOME WORKERS FROM THE VILLAGE
Sure...
THE PRINCESS SEEMS TO BE ACTING A BIT ODD
Chirp
Chirp
WHAT?

THEN SHE MUST NOT WANT TO LEAVE.
HOWEVER, SHE HAS NOT SPOKEN OF WANTING TO LEAVE THE VILLAGE.
WHETHER IT IS SOMETHING GOOD OR BAD, SHE USUALLY GETS VERY CURIOUS
IN THIS STRANGE LAND, I HAD EXPECTED HER TO WANT TO INTERACT WITH THE LOCALS.
Hm
A FEELING. . ARE YOU A MAGIC HERMIT OR SOMETHING? JUST WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?
A SLAVE
JUST A SLAVE WHO DOES NOT NEED WORDS TO UNDERSTAND THE PRINCESS.
HOW WOULD YOU, A SLAVE, KNOW WHAT THE PRINCESS IS THINKING?
NOT HER THOUGHTS. JUST A FEELING
NO, IT REALLY IS VERY STRANGE.

IS THAT STRANGE?
WHAT KIND OF A RELATIONSHIP DO YOU AND THE PRINCESS HAVE, EXACTLY?
LET US SHARE OUR BURDENS AS FELLOW FOREIGNERS
I HAVE NOTHING TO SAY TO YOU
Tap
Um'
Of course, it is... Such a strong bond is beyond that of master and slave...
STOP IT!
THERE IS NOTHING
Let me!
NONSENSE! TELL ME!
A DARK BASTARD KEEPS LINGERING AROUND ME, AND IT IS INCREDIBLY ANNOYING!
Is that

FIRST, A WANTED SIGN FOR THE ROYAL SEAL'S WHEREABOUTS
BUT IT WILL BE DANGEROUS IF IT IS DISCOVERED THAT I AM IN POSSESSION OF THE OTHER HALF.
IS THERE AN INVESTOR HERE WHO FAVORS ME?
I MUST GET THE ROYAL SEAL BEFORE QUEEN DO, AT ALL COSTS...

But what then?
With my Royal Father dead,
possessing the Royal Seal and defeating Queen Doe...
would mean...
that I will become the next ruler.

But I cannot defeat Queen Do without shedding blood.
For this just how many times would I need the support of numerous people? How much blood will I have to see?

A person responsible for the lives of many

is also responsible

for surviving for those people.

That is a king
and I must
sit on the set aside
cold lonely all those
throne desires
Just like my Royal Father
Who I want to live with
What I want to do

HAVE TO LIVE MY LIFE LIKE HOW FATHER DID?
WOULD I...
I must not falter! So many have sacrificed their lives for me.
THAT...

So many people, like Satetsu,
and Mother have devoted everything
to pave the way for me.
HOW CAN I...
BE SO SHAMELESS AS TO SAY THAT I DO NOT WANT TO TAKE THAT PATH,
BECAUSE I KNOW IT WILL HURT?
STAND
Even if my feet are covered in blood
I must keep walking

and it feels as though I am gradually losing myself.

is the path that I desire.

I will not let this injure me.
This

EMBRACE
WAH!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING, PRINCESS?
I WAS...
JUST...
REMEMBERING SOMETHING I ALWAYS WANTED TO DO AS A CHILD...
squeeze

COULD THIS BE A NEW TYPE OF TORTURE?!
IT FEELS SO SOFT!
WE ARE NOT CHILDREN ANYMORE!
NO, NO, NO!
BLUSH
Squeeze
NEVER CHANGE...
BECAUSE I DEFINITELY MUST.
AHAHAHAHAHAHA! WAIT, WAIT A SECOND!
HOW WAS THE VILLAGE? DID ANYONE LOOK AT YOU ODDLY BECAUSE OF YOUR BLONDE HAIR? I LIKE IT A LOT, THOUGH.
Rub
Rub

IF I BECOME THE MONSTER THAT QUEEN DO IS WHEN I BECOME THE RULER,
NEVER FORGIVE ME. DESPISE ME INSTEAD.
PLEASE ...

ABOUT RUNNING AWAY TOGETHER ONCE EVERYTHING IS OVER...
THAT PROMISE WE MADE
I DO NOT THINK I WILL BE ABLE TO KEEP IT...
LEAN AWAY
WHAT I SAID WAS PATHETIC.
IF SEIITSU WERE TO HEAR ABOUT THAT IN THE CAPITAL, HE WOULD PROBABLY BE DISAP-POINTED.
Chirp
Chirp
Chirp

IT DOES NOT MATTER!
GALLOP
HAKU-SE!...
HAKUSE!!
WHERE ARE WE GOING?!
I HAVE NOTHING WITH ME...
BUT YOU ALWAYS KEEP THAT GOLD SEAL WITH YOU, RIGHT?
HUH?
DOES HE MEAN THE ROYAL SEAL?
I DO HAVE IT, BUT...

WE CAN USE IT TO BUY WHATEVER WE NEED FOR OUR TRAVELS.
WHAT?!
PULL
DO YOU KNOW OF WHAT I SPEAK?!
I KNOW, BUT. -
WHY ARE YOU TRYING TO DO SOMETHING YOU DO NOT WANT TO DO, PRINCESS?
I ASK THE SAME THING TO YOU.
HOLD ON... WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS ALL OF A SUDDEN?

Ex
tend
NOW PLEASE GIVE ME THE GOLD.
I... I WILL NOT GIVE IT TO YOU JUST BECAUSE YOU ASK FOR IT!
WHY NOT?
WHY WHAT?
THE PEOPLE HERE DO NOT KNOW WHAT THAT PIECE OF GOLD IS.
YOU MUST HAVE SENSED IT. THOUGH THERE ARE PEOPLE HERE WHO LOOK AT ME WITH CURIOSITY,
NO ONE KNOWS WHO YOU REALLY ARE
YOU HAVE A CHOICE.

YOU CAN CHOOSE THE PATH WHERE YOU TRAVEL WITH ME...
AS AN ORDINARY GIRL.
WHETHER IT IS THE COUNTRY
OR THE MASSES
OR ANYONE ELSE, IT DOES NOT MATTER WHAT THEY THINK.
WHAT DO *YOU* WISH TO DO?

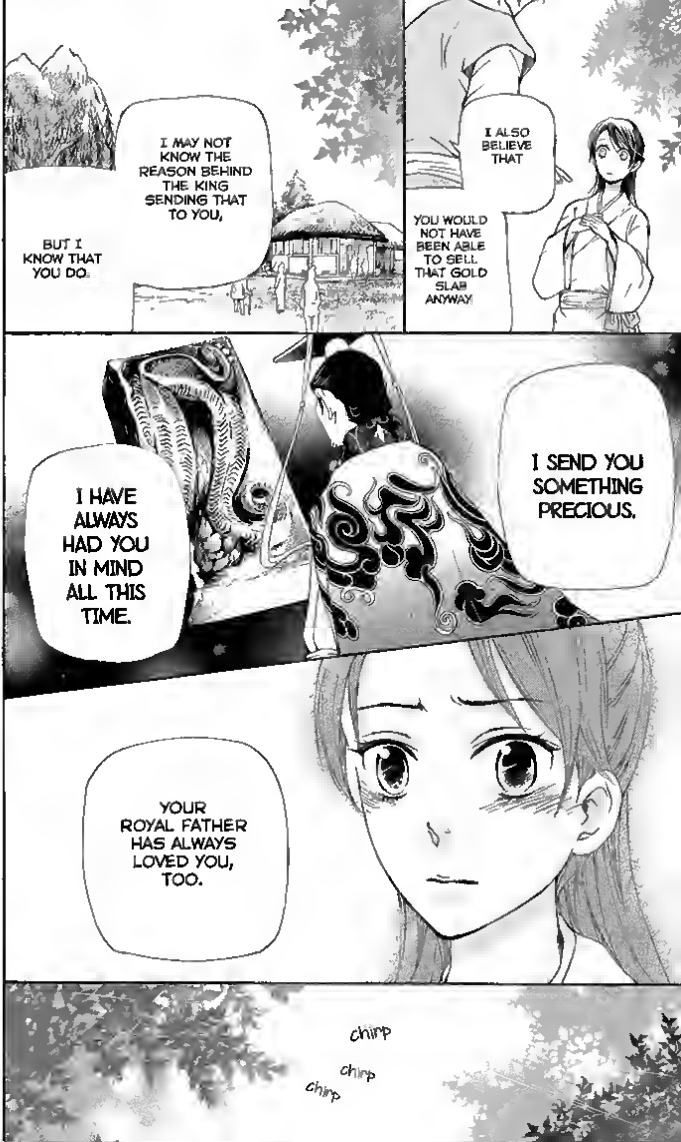
PAT
PAT
BUT NEVER MIND THAT
I CAN GO FIND WORK
AND IF WE RUN OUT OF MONEY,
WITH YOUR QUICK MIND AND MY SWORD, WE CAN EASILY RESOLVE THAT.
EVEN IF I WERE TO RUN AWAY, SOMEONE WOULD STILL PURSUE US...
I WANT TO HEAR WHAT YOU WANT TO DO.
RATHER THAN "I CANNOT," OR "I MUST DO THIS,"
I WILL DO EVERYTHING IN MY POWER TO FIND A WAY TO HELP YOU RUN AWAY.
IF IT BECOMES TOO DIFFICULT,

I can...run away? I can set aside these heavy burdens and anxieties buried inside me,
and forget them all...
and become an ordinary girl...
I WANT TO RUN AWAY.
THE TRUTH IS,
I WANT TO END THIS DIFFICULT AND ROUGH PATH.
Tear up
IT IS TOO DIFFICULT.
Badump

HOWEVER,
I HAVE RECEIVED SO MUCH LOVE.
SEITETSU AND MOTHER LOVED ME SO MUCH AND TOOK CARE OF ME,
THIS PATH HAS NOT SIMPLY BEEN ONE OF SUFFERING.
AS I HAVE MET MANY PEOPLE,
SO THAT I COULD LIVE BY MY OWN STRENGTH AND PROGRESS FORWARD.
Push
I CANNOT ABANDON IT.
ALTHOUGH THIS PATH MIGHT BECOME COVERED IN BLOOD,

THANK YOU FOR GIVING ME A CHANCE TO CHOOSE.
THOUGH I MAY FAIL AT EVERYTHING AND END UP DEAD ON THE SIDE OF THE ROAD.
THIS IS MY PATH.
I WANT TO TRAVEL WITH YOU, TOO,
BUT THERE ARE THINGS I MUST FIRST DO MYSELF. THOSE PROMISES WE ONCE MADE WILL HAVE TO BE SAVED FOR ANOTHER TIME, ANOTHER PLACE
WILL YOU FOLLOW ME?

neigh
I HAVE SAID IT BEFORE.
Smirk
IT SHOULD NOT BE, "WILL YOU FOLLOW ME?" BUT, "FOLLOW ME."
YOU ARE TRULY LOVED BY EVERYONE, PRINCESS.


I MAY NOT KNOW THE REASON BEHIND THE KING SENDING THAT TO YOU,
BUT I KNOW THAT YOU DO.
I ALSO BELIEVE THAT
YOU WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO SELL THAT GOLD SLAB ANYWAY
I SEND YOU SOMETHING PRECIOUS.
I HAVE ALWAYS HAD YOU IN MIND ALL THIS TIME.
YOUR ROYAL FATHER HAS ALWAYS LOVED YOU, TOO.
chirp
chirp
chirp

YOU LIED TO ME. THE TRUTH IS, YOU ARE SAD THAT HE HAD DIED.
YOU LOVED HIM AS WELL.
YOU LOVED HIM ENOUGH TO FEEL THE WEIGHT OF THAT GOLD SLAB AND FALTER ON YOUR PATH.
THAT IS MERELY A DREAM.

BUT
IT WOULD BE NICE IF IT WERE TRUE...
How is it that we can be so unalike in everything, from gender, to the color of our hair and our eyes, even to our positions?

And yet, you are my other half.
AS I THOUGHT,
THEY ARE FAR MORE THAN MERE MASTER-AND-SLAVE
Chirp
Chirp
Chirp

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